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ABSTRACT

Part of a 13-volume series designed to help Lutheran communities assess the feasibility of starting a Lutheran elementary school and to assist ongoing schools in current operation, this volume is intended to help Lutheran boards of education clarify their role and make policy. The first part of the document deals with role, function, and organization of Lutheran boards of education. Following an introduction, the second section looks at and defines several roles for the board of education, including roles in leadership, problem-solving, decision-making, and ministering. Section 3 looks at three functions of the board of education: policy-making, supervision, and management. Section 4 deals with organization of the board, including criteria for membership, size, officers, length of term, committees, and other factors. Section 5 outlines suggestions for conducting effective board meetings. The second half of the document concentrates on how to establish a Lutheran board of education policy manual and presents a sample table of contents for such a manual. (JM)

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ED176384

BOARD OF EDUCATION HANDBOOK

PART ONE: ROLE, FUNCTION, AND ORGANIZATION

INTRODUCTION

ROLES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD

BOARD MEETINGS

PART TWO: POLICY MANUAL

HOW TO ESTABLISH A POLICY MANUAL

POLICY MANUAL TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLANNING FOR LUTHERAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

EA 012 095

E03

FOREWORD

Lutheran schools in America are flourishing.

Many Lutheran communities are presently conducting feasibility studies to determine if they can have a Lutheran school for their young people. The need for materials to help Lutheran congregations conduct feasibility studies and make responsible educational decisions has become quite urgent.

Through the coordinated efforts and generous financial help of Aid Association for Lutherans, representatives of the educational offices of the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod have combined their efforts in the development of PLANNING FOR LUTHERAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS materials. These materials are companion to PLANNING FOR LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOLS, and PLANNING FOR LUTHERAN EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS.

PLANNING FOR LUTHERAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS has been designed to help Lutheran communities assess the feasibility of a school for their young people and make plans and responsible decisions for the establishment of a school. Resource materials are intended to assist existing schools in their ongoing operation. While these materials are designed to help congregational leaders, it is advisable to consult with synodical (district or regional) leaders as you begin planning your feasibility study.

Often the principal will be the first person to read this manual. I urge the principal to know the content of this document thoroughly. The principal will order additional copies for those who will benefit from its use. The above is true also for directors of education and early childhood programs.

The work of the following writers is herewith gratefully acknowledged: Dr. Glenn Bracht, Mr. Robert Eggold, Mr. Eldor Kaiser, Mr. Donald Kell, Mr. Ellsworth Kierbs, Dr. Glenn Kraft, Mr. Kenneth Markworth, Mr. Neal Meitler, Rev. Paul Pallmeyer, Mr. Richard Sauer, Mr. Wilbur Tewes and Dr. Martin Wessler. A special word of thanks to the synodical leaders who gave counsel and encouragement in this project: Dr. Victor Constien, Mr. Glenn Moenning, Dr. Al Senske, Dr. Marlin Schultz, Mr. Donald Vetter and Mr. Donald Zimmerman. Thanks to Lois Prahlow for artwork; Jim Reigles for editing; Lois Brandt, Harriette Johnson and Florence Schoenfeldt for typing and Trip Gesch for printing. To Aid Association for Lutherans staff members: Dr. Martin Koehneke, Mr. Fred Pahl, Mr. William Selle and Mr. Donald Stoike thanks for their encouragement and counsel.

These materials are dedicated to the glory of God for the extension of Lutheran education.

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Martin F. Wessler
Project Director

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PART ONE: ROLE, FUNCTION AND ORGANIZATION

INTRODUCTION

A. WHY A BOARD HANDBOOK

If Lutheran congregations and schools want to achieve their full potential for ministry, it is necessary for boards of education to have clearly defined roles and to develop skills which will insure effective administration of Lutheran schools. John Ruskin has said, "Where love and skill work together, there expect a masterpiece." A board of education will find many ways to express love as it defines the role which it will play in the congregation. Boards will also want to develop skills to fulfill their roles and carry out their functions as they seek to operate an effective Lutheran elementary school.

The need for a Board of Education Handbook is obvious when one notes the many requests of board members for help in management of Lutheran schools. Evidently many problems arise because boards of education do not clearly know their role and function or understand their relationship to the administrator and staff. Factors most often identified as problems and concerns of school board members include:

- The role of the board, principal or pastor is not defined, or poorly defined.
- Knowledge about finances, policies, procedures and relationships is limited, or unclear.
- Control over factors which are important to successful management seems difficult to achieve.
- Orientation and training of board members is missing or inadequate and materials to help board members are limited or inadequate.
- Election or appointment of board members is done without the benefit of guidelines or criteria.

Lutheran schools can be successful and board members can experience joy when the role of board members, administrators, and staff members is clearly defined. The purpose of this document is to help boards of education take action that will result in good school management, good relationships, accountability, and a successful school program that ministers to the needs of children and parents in the congregation.

B. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Before discussing role, function and organization, a board must understand the scope of its responsibility. This understanding provides good opportunity for a board to evaluate, modify or reaffirm the scope of responsibility assigned to it.

Some Lutheran congregations with schools assign all responsibilities of Christian education and all Christian education agencies to one board generally called the Board of Christian Education. Other congregations assign only school management to a single board usually known as a school board.

1. The Board of Christian Education Model

The Board of Christian Education is usually responsible for all Christian education activities in the congregation including the Lutheran school, Sunday school, adult education, vacation Bible school, Christian instruction for the public school children, confirmation instruction classes, etc. The advantage of combining all Christian activity under the responsibility of one board is to assure that coordination and cooperation are accomplished among all of these programs. A single board can insure that each program receives adequate attention, staffing, funding, facilities, and other support needed to insure a successful program.

Since the school responsibilities alone can keep the board busy, efficiency may be achieved by organizing into committees for the 1) school, 2) Sunday school and vacation Bible school, 3) adult education, and 4) the youth program if it is included under the board of education. Each committee and the total board should meet regularly. The school committee would perform the functions of a school board, but the formal approval of policies and other major decisions remain the responsibility of the total board of education. If the board uses committees, it is important for the board chairman and principal to keep all functions coordinated. It is important that the entire board retain full responsibility for its assignment.

Congregations organized in this manner sometimes choose to engage a Director of Christian Education who is responsible for all Christian education agencies, including the school. Having one board and a single administrator makes it possible to coordinate all Christian education activities and increases the probability that all programs will be successfully integrated and each achieves its goals. The board, through its administrator, can coordinate and direct staff, facilities, equipment and schedule to insure a comprehensive ministry in all agencies and programs of Christian education.

2. The School Board Model

A school board normally is responsible only for operation of the Christian day school. This organizational arrangement allows the board and principal to concentrate efforts on the operation of the elementary school. It has the disadvantage of potentially failing to integrate other Christian educational programs and potential for conflict as priorities are established within a congregation.

Making the principal responsible only for school activities is a common practice in Lutheran churches and is often chosen as an alternative because of the wide range of responsibilities associated with the school. However, some congregations may wish to investigate the first alternative and seek to improve and expand their total Christian educational ministry in this way.

The material in this document focuses principally on the administration of a Lutheran elementary school. This should not be interpreted to mean that boards of education should be assigned only responsibility for the elementary school. Boards responsible for the total Christian education program will find most of the suggestions in this document are appropriate for them.

Note to the reader: You are urged to review the listing of documents on the last page of this booklet. Each document provides detailed information and help for the management of Lutheran schools.

ROLES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Often we use the terms "role" and "function" when discussing the responsibilities of board of education without clearly delineating the difference and meaning of each. When we refer to role, we speak about the board's attitude, behavior, style and character as it directs the affairs of the school in accordance with expectations of students, parents and the congregation. Function, on the other hand, has more to do with the specific tasks assigned to the board so that the goals and objectives of the congregation and school can be met. The following pages will first identify and discuss the significant elements that describe the role of the board. This will be followed by Section III which describes the functions and assignments of the board.

A. LEADERSHIP ROLE

Few Lutheran schools would exist if it were not that boards of education, along with the staff, fulfill a strong leadership role. Lutheran schools exist to a large degree, next to the Grace of God, due to the commitment of people to the Lord Jesus, and their commitment to teach diligently God's children and young people. Leadership, therefore, is critical to help congregations, congregation members and parents make and renew their commitments to the Lord and to Christian education.

The board fulfills its leadership role in the following specific ways:

1. As Spokesman

   It should be obvious that every board member is committed to Lutheran elementary schools as the best avenue by which a congregation can care for young people. When board members are so committed, the board will "speak" through policies and position statements. Month-by-month decisions will express and demonstrate the board's commitment to the Lutheran school. To the degree that board members effectively express their commitment, congregation members and parents will hold and accept that same commitment.

   The board should be constantly aware of its responsibility to inform, educate, and encourage congregation members, parents and students to participate fully and joyfully in the Lutheran school ministry. This is a key spokesman responsibility. The board should at all times be sensitive to criticism or negativism that tends to erode the commitment of people to the school. When criticism and negativism appear, the board needs to "speak" wisely, kindly, and responsibly.

   The board and all members will keep in mind four target groups: 1) families with children enrolled in the school, 2) members of the congregation that supports the school, 3) families with children who are prospective enrollees, and 4) the community in which the school is located.

   While most functions of the board are carried out when the board assembles as a group, the spokesman role is fulfilled in the daily lives and activities of each board member. The commitment

and devotion of each board member becomes obvious as he sends his own children to the Lutheran school and as he speaks in a positive way to other congregation members. In his day-to-day living among members of the congregation and in the community, the board members has opportunity to speak joyfully of the school and its effective ministry.

2. As Educational Leaders

When a congregation elects or appoints its board of education, it expects board members to be informed and knowledgeable. The congregation and members of the school staff want board members to know what developments are occurring in the field of education, to understand in clear terms the distinctiveness of Christian education, and to understand the needs and goals of children and youth. It is important for the board to spend some time each meeting becoming informed of educational matters, understanding boys and girls, and understanding the distinctively Christian way of educating them. When the board is so informed, it is better able to manage the school, wisely establish responsible policies, and plan confidently for the educational lives of students.

The principal and board chairman can strengthen the leadership role of the board by planning a series of study sessions during each year to cover one or more of the following topics:

a. Programs within the school. Teachers could present the purpose, activities, and outcomes of a program recently implemented in the school. To tie in with the faculty's curriculum evaluation, teachers could review one area of the curriculum for the board each year. These programs help the board become better informed about their school.

b. Popular or budding ideas in public education and church education. Ideas such as open education, back to basics, outdoor education, and parent effectiveness training could be presented for the board's information.

c. Laws and proposed legislation that affects schools. Tax credits, textbook allowances for private schools, and other proposed legislation should be studied by the board. Members should also write to elected officials to express their views for Lutheran schools.

d. Responsibilities of the board of education. The board should periodically spend a study session on one of its functions or roles. By evaluating the board's handling of the function or role in the past, changes can be prescribed for improving the function or role.

The board's in-service study sessions may be scheduled at the beginning or conclusion of some regular meetings, but separate sessions may be more suitable for some topics. In addition to the group studies, it is also important for each board member to grow personally through reading, listening, and observing. Each member should formulate a personal plan of growth for the year.

An informed board of education can help interpret the Christian education ministry to the congregation. Congregation members and parents have very legitimate questions regarding their children and the educational program designed for them. The integrity of the school and its ministry is strengthened when the board of education and its members can interpret their actions on the basis of knowledge and insight regarding education and an understanding of youth.

3. As Advocate

An important role of the board is to direct and interpret the school's ministry as an integral part of the congregation's ministry. The board is not only interested in running a good school, but is interested in serving children and young people in accord with the congregation's expectations. The board assumes the role of advocate when it expresses concern for the child who may not be enrolled, for the child (and his family) who for one reason or another may be experiencing difficulty. The board is constantly directing the educational life of the school so at all times it is a ministry for the Lord Jesus to children and youth.

B. PROBLEM-SOLVING AND DECISION-MAKING ROLE

A successful school operation is dependent on a board that has a "style" so it can operate successfully. This means that the board must have a capacity to deal with problems, often tough ones, and to make wise decisions. Board members must possess the commitment to work with one another and with the principal and staff members in such a way that the best decisions are made for the school and that problems are solved wisely. This must be accomplished without serious conflict and frustration. Again, congregation members, parents and students must have the confidence that the board will deal with problems, even tough ones, and do so with success. This means that board members must be ready to hear all opinions, gather all facts, recognize feelings and vested interests that may be present, and yet deal in Christian love, charity and wisdom regarding the matters at hand. Obviously, when a board permits division to occur and makes public its frustration, the board's feelings will filter into the parish and begin to erode harmonious relationships and cooperation.

C. MINISTERING ROLE

Board members see themselves as God's men and women who are always ready to minister to one another as they serve together. If ministry is to occur, board members, when assembled or in private, will seek God's blessings and guidance. As ministry occurs among board members, the Christian life and faith of each board member grows with each finding joy in service. When the spirit of ministry exists, the board becomes a model of ministry to every congregation member and to every school family - father, mother and children. Then every member of the school family can sense that the school is in good hands - in God's hands.

Encouragement and support for the faculty is another key dimension of the school board's ministry. Board members should regularly greet the teachers, show interest in their activities, commend them for accomplishments, and thank them for their faithful service. In addition to the informal contacts with teachers, the board should meet once or twice a year with the faculty to hear its problems, joys and suggestions.

D. THE ROLE OF EFFECTIVE "BOARDSMANSHIP"

The term "boardsmanship" is used rather often to describe the characteristics and skills of a really effective board. This entire handbook seeks to present criteria and guidelines for effective boardsmanship. The statements below identify key characteristics of boardsmanship. These statements were prepared by Dr. LaVerne Cunningham while professor at Chicago University.

1. A board has strength when it has some organized way of examining its schools.
2. A board has strength when it is interested in what it is going to be, rather than what it has been.
3. A board has strength when it possesses some means of combatting the vested interests that develop within it.
4. A board has strength when it has a hospitable environment for a variety of people.
5. A board has strength when it can develop ways of carrying on constructive self-criticism.
6. A board has strength when it has a means of combatting the process by which men and women become prisoners of their own procedures.
7. A board has strength when it possess problem-solving adequacy.
8. A board has strength when it has the capability to evaluate ideas on the basis of merit rather than the source of their origin.
9. A board has strength when it has a reasonably fluid internal structure sufficient to permit persons to work together in many ways for diverse purposes.
10. A board has strength when it runs on motivation, conviction, and morale.

At lease once a year the board should rate its own performance. A self-evaluation can begin with an independent rating by each board member. Areas to be evaluated may include the roles and functions described in this handbook. Additional items could include the board's working relationship with the principal and the church council. The performance of the board can be rated on a five-point scale for each item. Other rating scales which are more specific and contain more items are also valuable.

After the ratings are summarized, the board should discuss its performance in each area. Specific goals for improvement can then be established.

Note to the reader: You are urged to review the listing of documents on the last page of this booklet. Each document provides detailed information and help for the management of Lutheran schools.

FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Most board of education members will agree that theirs is a big job and there are many tasks for boards to perform. The following pages suggest that there are three major functions for the board of education. They are policy-making, supervision and management.

Most of the many tasks assigned to a board can be handled in one of the three major functions. It is important that board members understand these three functions. Understanding these functions and how they work will help assure board members that they are following good management practices and their school is in good hands.

A. POLICY-MAKING FUNCTION

The primary function of the board of education is to establish policy whereby the board assures that all aspects of the school's operation are well managed. Through board policy the board can direct and manage all aspects of school operation including supervision of the principal and staff, supervision of finances and facilities, and supervision of curriculum and student life. Policies are clear statements expressing the views and directives of the board for managing the school and providing guidelines for the ongoing administration of the school.

Well defined policies can aid considerably in the effective administration of a Lutheran school:

- Policies direct and allow the principal and staff to make decisions and carry out their work on a daily basis with the confidence that they are within the parameters established by the board.

- Policies remove the need for the board to make administrative decisions, saving time for the board. If policies have been carefully developed, careless decisions are avoided.

- Policies help inform, educate and direct students, parents, staff and congregation members. Policies are reported in handbooks and guidelines for students, parents and staff.

- Policies, particularly if maintained carefully in a manual, assure continuity of administration as new board members and staff assume office.

Because the policy-making function is so critical, Part II of this manual is devoted entirely to policy-making function. (The reader may wish to glance at the pages in Part II.)

B. SUPERVISION FUNCTION

An effective board of education manages most aspects of the school program through its policies and through the supervision of the principal, pastor and staff as they carry out the board's policy. (In some instances, the board may become involved in direct supervision of financial-planning and facilities-planning activities. The section which follows discusses the management functions of the board.)

1. The Pastor

The pastor's role in school leadership and administration is often unclear, leading, at times, to frustration and conflict. While usually the principal serves as chief administrator, it is important that the board of education provide opportunity for the pastor to exercise his leadership and for the board to counsel, guide and support the pastor in his educational ministry.

The pastor is responsible for providing spiritual leadership for all ministries and to all members of the congregation including the school. Conflict may arise if the pastor has no clear role and function and becomes directly involved in administration of the school.

The pastor, as an *ex officio* member of the board, can fulfill his role best by giving spiritual leadership to the board as they establish policy. It is important that the pastor and principal together suggest policies for consideration by the board. In this way, the influence of the pastor on the school is through the board of education and through the establishment of policy which guides the principal. The importance of the pastor in policy making is to assure that the school will remain distinctly Christian.

If the pastor has responsibility for performing specific assignments in the school, he should do so according to policy under the guidance of the principal. For instance, the pastor may teach classes or conduct chapel services. In these instances, the principal is responsible for the function, and the pastor should coordinate his activities under the principal's leadership.

2. The Principal and Staff

It is obvious that the principal holds a key role in maintaining successful management of a school. It becomes the principal's responsibility to carry out the spirit and intent of policies established by the board. An important role of the board, therefore, is the supervision of the principal.

a. Board/Principal Relationship

The principal is the on-the-job administrative officer of the board, who, with staff members, has the responsibility to carry out the policies and directives of the board. The principal's authority must always be commensurate with the entrusted responsibilities. Behind every successful principal is a board that upholds the administration in prayer and with public and private statements of support.

Problems and conflicts can arise when either of two situations occur. The principal may feel that there exists a free hand and abuses the concept of final authority in carrying out the board's policies. The other problem occurs when the board supervises so closely that the principal is not free to make decisions and to use personal best judgement in executing daily tasks in accordance with board policy.

Both of the above problems can be avoided if there is a clear understanding of the board's role, the role of policy, and the principal's role at the outset. Problems can be avoided when the principal is ready at regular and special board meetings to present comprehensive reports of the activities of the past period. When the principal so reports to the board, the board has an opportunity to give its response, guidance, counsel or criticism so that the principal becomes sensitive to and aware of the board's feelings. The principal also uses these opportunities to ask for advice, opinions and suggestions of the board as decisions are made. When the principal seeks advice, the board normally should not make the decision for the principal, but rather seek to advise so that the principal is better able to make the decision.

Occasionally the principal is called upon to make decisions where no policy exists. Rather than ask the board to make the decision, the principal should ask the board to establish a policy on which this decision and subsequent similar decisions can be made.

Rarely is it appropriate for the board of education to reverse decisions of a principal because this erodes the image and authority of the office and makes it difficult for the principal to work effectively as administrator.

When parents or others bring complaints to any member of the board, they should be directed to the principal. Only after repeated refusal or inability on the part of the principal to deal with the matter should the board consider action, and then only after all efforts have been made to solve the problem. Unreasonable concerns by parents or others should not be permitted to destroy the rapport between the principal and board members. If, on the other hand, the principal is not able to successfully handle a part of the job assignment, it may become necessary for the board (not the individual members) to take action.

Through the principal, the board carries out its responsibility for supervision of the staff, student body, curriculum, public relations programs, and other specific assignments that may be stipulated by the board. The board normally carries out these responsibilities through the principal and the board should refrain from direct involvement in areas of school operation.

When the principal and the board observe the above considerations, a spirit of team work will grow and flourish.

b. Accountability and Evaluation

Much of the accountability and supervision of the principal is accomplished in board meetings as the principal presents reports and seeks the board's guidance. Reports by the principal provide an opportunity for interaction and decision making and are the primary means by which the board receives information and supervises the principal's activities.

It is critical that the principal accepts the responsibility for preparing careful, comprehensive and clear written reports. Written reports, over a period of months, will cover all school programs and activities; reports should provide information, statements of evaluation, questions for discussion, (if appropriate), and recommendations where needed.

All staff members should periodically be evaluated and informed of the feelings of the board about their performance, with compliments paid and specific suggestions for improvement made. The principal is responsible for teacher evaluation and should report staff evaluations annually. Periodic teacher evaluations by the principal can best be accomplished by using an instrument and procedure designed for this purpose. The teacher performance evaluation presented in document E04-Personnel Handbook, may serve very well, with slight modifications.

Evaluation sessions with the principal should result in the establishment of goals for the future and with clear guidelines concerning the implementation and evaluation of these goals. Keep in mind that the board's evaluation of the principal will be particularly helpful to the principal in preparing evaluations of the teachers and other staff members.

The following steps will be helpful in the evaluation process with the principal.

Step One: Discuss with the principal a self-evaluation including:

- What has been satisfying in your work?
- What are your struggles and frustrations?
- What are your hopes (dreams) for our school?

Step Two: Ask the principal to discuss his major responsibilities including:

- Leadership and Supervision of Curriculum and Instruction
  - Merits: What good things have been accomplished?
  - Shortcomings: What has been overlooked? What has been stressed too much? too little?

- Relationships with Students, Parents, Teachers, Pastors, Boards. For each of the above, discuss:

  - Merits: What good things have been accomplished?

  - Shortcomings: What has been overlooked? What has been stressed too much? too little?

- Management of Policies, Procedures, and Daily Operation of the School

  - Merits: What good things have been accomplished?

  - Shortcomings: What has been overlooked? What has been stressed too much? too little?

Step Three: Evaluate with the principal:

- The principal's job description; make changes as necessary

- Matters pertaining to personal welfare

- Short- and long-range plans for the school

c. Caring for the Principal

Because of the important role of the principal, the board needs to be certain that it cares for the principal in such a way that assignments given can be carried out.

To be effective, the board needs to provide adequate administrative time so that the principal can accomplish the activities which are assigned. The amount of time needed will vary depending on the size of the school and the variety of other assignments given to the principal. As a guideline, the following may be helpful in determining the time needed by the principal to perform administrative duties:

Size of School	Time for Administration
One to three classrooms	Equivalent of 1 day per week
Four to six classrooms	Equivalent of 2 days per week
Seven to nine classrooms	Equivalent of 3 days per week
Ten or more classrooms	Full Time

The board must also provide the tools and facilities needed by the principal. These include: adequate work space, adequate clerical support, and other forms of administrative tools and assistance to assure that the principal can efficiently do the assigned job.

Caring for the principal also involves provision of adequate compensation and adequate fringe benefit programs to meet personal and family needs.

C. MANAGEMENT FUNCTION

1. The Meaning of Management

Previous pages emphasize that the board manages the school operation as it establishes policy and supervises the principal and staff. It is important to emphasize this fact again.

Many board members feel that some of their most important tasks include making decisions regarding tuition and fees, calling and engaging staff members, setting school calendars, and salary schedules. These are important tasks. Most of these tasks are provided for as the board establishes policy regarding each item.

When a board establishes a policy re any of the above, it is making an important decision; it is managing the school's operation. For example, the board may establish a policy covering the setting of the yearly school calendar. The policy may specify the guidelines to be followed in preparation of the calendar, direct the principal to prepare the first draft of the calendar, and present the calendar to the board for modification (if needed) and approval. Following approval, the principal is responsible for publicizing the school calendar and planning the school year accordingly. By setting policy, the board does a good job of management.

Generally the principal is responsible for administering the policies of the board of education. Because Lutheran schools frequently are an integral part of the congregation's ministry and administration, several areas of management and administration need to be considered in a special way. These include management of finances, facilities and building programs.

2. Management of Finances

The board of education is responsible for seeing to it that budgets and five year financial projections are prepared annually and that adequate funding is available to accomplish the objectives of the school. Budgeting for the school should be done in accordance with the materials outlined in document E08-Financial Planning and Accounting Handbook. Document E09-Funding of Lutheran Elementary Schools also provides guidelines for this area.

Because of variations in the structure of congregations, the final responsibilities for these activities may rest with the board of education, the church finance committee or the church council. In any case, the school budget must be carefully coordinated with the church budget and its financial affairs. In some instances, the past practice may be that the school budget is the full responsibility of congregational financial officers. We strongly suggest that the board of education play a strong role in development of a complete school budget so that it can insure that its responsibilities are being fulfilled for providing an adequate educational program.

The principal should usually have major responsibility for preparation of the school budget along with a committee of the education board. In any case, the recommendations of the principal are important as the budget is formulated and decisions are made.

3. Management of Facilities

In this area also, congregational structures differ in the assignment of responsibility for facilities. The board of education may have a major responsibility for school facilities, or this may be the responsibility of a board of trustees or other similar committees. In any case, the board of education should take an active role to insure that facilities are adequate to achieve the objectives of the school which includes the equipping, maintaining and expanding of school facilities. Decisions concerning facilities also impact on the school budget and require careful coordination in this way.

If the custodial staff is responsible to a board other than the board of education, it is important that the principal has some supervision responsibilities to assure day-by-day care of the building and school facilities.

Although the principal may not have primary responsibility for supervision of facilities, his viewpoints are important and should be heard by the board responsible for this area. He must also be fully informed of actions taken regarding facilities so that the school program can be planned accordingly.

4. When Board Members Perform Management Assignments

When meeting together, the board establishes policy for the Lutheran school. Later, when policies must be executed, individual board members may be called upon to perform some of the management tasks. When performing a management task, the board member should operate under board policy. Of necessity, the principal must be responsible for what happens in the school; so board members who participate in performing management assignments must let the principal direct their assignments. The principal, demonstrating leadership and concern, should be skilled in helping board members carry out their assignments.

Note to the reader: You are urged to review the listing of documents on the last page of this booklet. Each document provides detailed information and help for the management of Lutheran schools.

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD

The preceding section focused on many of the objectives and important relationships of the board of education. Also important are organizational considerations of the board such as size, officers, organization, subcommittees, records and reports, and other organizational considerations. Boards of education can be organized in a variety of ways, many of which may be effective in the congregation. The following suggestions are presented as guidelines for Lutheran congregations as they determine an organizational structure for their boards of education.

A. CRITERIA FOR BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The fundamental criteria for board membership is that each member believes without reservation in the Christian day school and be willing and able to contribute to its program. Board members, in meetings and in their individual lives, should set an example that reflects positively on the school, and they should be good models of Christian behavior as they are observed by students, staff, and parents. Above all, board members should express in their daily living their readiness to live in harmony with the Word and will of God.

The nominating committee has a particularly important job as they identify candidates who meet the criteria for effective board membership. It is suggested that the congregation approve and annually review a list of criteria, similar to the following, as a basis for identifying the best possible candidates for the board of education.

General Criteria

1. Voting member in good standing in the congregation.
2. Experience and demonstrated leadership in congregational life.
3. A vibrant interest in and understanding of Christian education.
4. Regular attendance at meetings.
5. Diversified competencies to enable the board to deal with its multiple concerns and responsibilities (theological competence, educational skills, financial skills, knowledge of facilities, etc.).
6. An age range among board members.
7. A diversity of perspectives (parents, non-parents, former parents, individuals representing various income ranges).

B. SIZE OF THE BOARD

The number of members on the board may vary relative to the size of the school, size of the congregation and responsibilities assigned to the board. Generally, board membership should range between five to nine members. The pastor and principal should both serve as *ex officio* members of the board.

C. OFFICERS OF THE BOARD

The board of education usually elects its own officers at the first regular meeting after the election of new members. Terms of office are usually for a one year period. Officers of the board should include a chairman, vice-chairman, secretary and financial officer. To insure that officers understand their responsibilities and to aid in the training of new officers, it may be advisable to prepare job descriptions for each position.

As an aid to the board of education in selecting officers, a list of desirable characteristics for individuals appointed to each position is listed below:

1. Chairman
   a. Should be ready to give adequate time for the tasks.
   b. Should be a sensitive pace setter.
   c. Should be able to motivate people.
   d. Should be a positive person.
   e. Should have stature in the congregation.
   f. Should be able to draw the goodwill of individuals in the congregation.
   g. Should have credibility with the pastor and congregational members.
   h. Should have organizational skills.

2. Vice-Chairman
   a. Should be capable of serving in the absence of the chairman.
   b. Should be capable of assuming numberous assignments as directed by the chairman.
   c. Should represent the chairman when called upon to do so.

3. Secretary
   a. Should be capable of preparing minutes of all meetings.
   b. Should be capable of handling correspondence as directed by the board.
   c. Should have access to duplicating equipment.
   d. Should be capable of maintaining a complete set of files.

4. Financial Officer
   a. Should have some experience in bookkeeping and be competent in fiscal matters.
   b. Should be capable of preparing detailed school budgets which accurately reflect educational, staff and facility needs.

c. Should be an accurate and detailed person who is capable of preparing timely financial reports.

d. Should be able to work effectively with the church finance committee, the church treasurer or other such individual.

D. LENGTH OF TERM

Policies specifying the length of term for board of education members should be approved by the congregation. Board members who serve too long may eventually become a hindrance to the school due to lack of creativity and new ideas. On the other hand, to do effective work, these members should serve long enough to follow through on policies and projects. A term of two or three years is suggested to insure continuity in management of the school. In order to insure continuity, terms should not expire simultaneously.

E. COMMITTEES

The board must be concerned about doing the most efficient and thorough job possible as it provides the leadership for the school. If special assignments or heavy workloads suggest that committees would be the most efficient way to do an effective job, then it would be advisable to organize in this way. Standing committees are acceptable, but should be used with caution because they may have a tendency to make decisions outside of board meetings and other board members may fail to be adequately involved in board assignments. Special assignments are best handled by *ad hoc* committees which can function for the duration of the assignment and then be dissolved. Committees may be used for budget planning, facility analysis, program evaluation, or other similar assignments. However, all reports and decisions should be reserved for the board as a whole.

F. MINUTES, RECORDS AND REPORTS

Carefully prepared minutes should be kept of every board meeting. If the school has a secretary, much information pertinent to the school can be maintained in the school office. If the school does not have a secretary, it is especially important that the board of education assures that adequate records are maintained concerning all instructional and administrative aspects of the school.

G. RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER AGENCIES AND BOARD

The board of education is responsible for administration of a very extensive ministry within the congregation. School budgets and staff salaries will generally represent the largest single component of the total congregation program. However, the school should not operate as an entity in itself but as an extension of the congregation and its ministry. Board members must at all times keep in mind that their decisions and activities are subject to review by the congregation and must be made in accordance with policies and wishes of the congregation. Although it is essential that the board understand its role relative to the other agencies and boards within the congregation, the board will still find it necessary to function as a group which provides guidance and makes decisions for the school. As stated earlier, this can best be done when the board of education operates with policies which have been approved by the congregation and which clarify the parameters within which the board can operate the school.

H. HANDBOOK FOR BOARD MEMBERS

If the board maintains a policy manual and a procedure manual, these two manuals will serve as handbooks for board members. In order to insure continuity in the school operation and orderly transition as new board members are appointed or elected, the board of education handbook can be a very meaningful asset in achieving this objective. The handbook should be given to new members when they join the board. The handbook should contain board policies and guidelines for board members such as those outlined in this handbook. To increase the likelihood that board members will be adequately prepared to assume their responsibilities, it may be advisable to schedule an in-service session for the board at the beginning of each year for purposes of reviewing the board handbook and preparing board members in other ways for the important tasks of providing guidance to the Lutheran school.

BOARD MEETINGS

Effective board of education meetings convey to the congregation, staff and students that the school is in good hands. The board should be mindful that all of its activities have the potential for projecting a positive spirit and developing goodwill for the school.

Decisions, when made carefully and wisely, can reinforce the feeling that the school is well run. When board meetings are well planned and conducted in an orderly manner, a sense of well-being is promoted.

The regular attendance of all members at meetings is an important factor in assuring that board meetings are effective. Regular attendance gives evidence that board members view their work as important and that the needs of the school are receiving priority attention.

The paragraphs which follow contain suggestions for conducting effective board meetings. These suggestions will help each member experience joy in his work and promote goodwill and confidence among students, staff members, parents and congregation members.

A. PREPARATION FOR BOARD MEETING

1. The Agenda

A well-prepared agenda will help insure that board meetings be effective and efficient. A well-planned agenda insures that priority items are considered and that a logical sequence will be followed to give adequate time to the most important issues. The absence of an agenda often results in meetings that ramble from one point to another, in decisions poorly made and in key items overlooked or treated carelessly.

The principal, in consultation with the board chairman, should take the initiative to prepare an agenda for the board. In addition to preparation of the monthly agenda, it is advisable to prepare an agenda for the entire year to insure that all major items are considered on schedule. An annual agenda serves to alert board members to items coming up for consideration, e.g. school calendar, salary recommendations, fee schedules, budget planning, etc.

The monthly board agenda should be developed by listing items from the annual schedule, reviewing the previous month's agenda, reviewing the minutes of the last month's meeting, and listing additional agenda items that have been identified during the past month. It is important to constantly review the minutes of prior meetings to insure that decisions are being implemented and that items are not forgotten.

The business of the board of education will generally fall into the same major categories month after month. One way to develop the monthly agenda is to list the same major categories on each monthly agenda and then identify specific issues each month under

major headings. The following is a model agenda that could be used for this purpose.

a. Call to order

b. Devotion (can be combined with d.)

c. Roll call

d. Bible study or topic. Members of the board can grow in their theological and educational understanding as monthly presentations are made by board members, principal, staff members or others.

e. Overview of agenda. An overview of the agenda can set the tone for the meeting and establish a dynamic quality for the meeting. It also provides an opportunity for last-minute changes or additions before proceeding with the meeting.

f. Approval of minutes of the last meeting.

g. Principal's and/or pastor's report.

h. Administrative matters. List administrative matters that deal with correspondence, elections, special issues and other matters not included in i, j, k.

i. Educational matters. List all staff and educational considerations that must be brought before the board.

j. Building and grounds. List all items related to facilities.

k. Financial reports. Provide for presentation of the financial report, consideration of salary schedules, preliminary discussion of fees, and other similar matters that should be considered by the board.

l. Evaluation of the meeting. The board should quickly evaluate the meeting to determine if it was conducted in the most effective manner and should make suggestions for future meetings. Agenda items for future meetings should also be suggested at this time.

m. Adjournment

* If the above agenda is used, the chairman and the principal should identify items of priority concern or items that may require special time and attention.

2. Alerting board members.

Board members should be notified well ahead of board meetings and, if possible, should be given an advance copy of the agenda. Board members can be prepared for meetings when sufficient material is mailed in advance. Materials should include financial reports and other reports to be made by staff or committee members. Board members should be encouraged to study the materials and be prepared to take appropriate action on all agenda items. Committee reports and other oral presentations should be planned in advance to insure that they are brief and organized. It is the chairman's responsibility to encourage everyone to do adequate preparation for the meeting.

B. THE BOARD MEETING

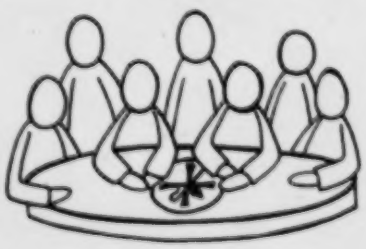
An effective board meeting seeks to accomplish several important objectives. The meeting itself generally deals with agenda items, business decisions and the feelings and attitudes of all members. Dealing with opinions and feelings of board members, congregation members, and parents must be integrated into the board meeting to insure that everyone has had an adequate opportunity to speak. This can best be done when board meetings are approached with prayer and proper spiritual preparation.

The chairman of the board has several important resporsibilities when conducting the meeting. He should insure that the agenda items receive an adequate hearing and are dealt with in an efficient manner. He must also insure that all board members have equal opportunity to participate and that the principal and pastor have adequate time to share their views on various subjects. He will be sensitive to the feelings of all and seek to maintain a positive spirit during the entire meeting. The chairman should insure that lengthly debates are avoided, that members talk to the subject at hand, and that each item is handled in an expedient, but thorough, manner. Lengthy board meetings month after month tend to be self-defeating and frustrating for the participants.

The chairman should try to enrich the meeting by seeking input from all members, helping board members to understand various viewpoints and see both their merits and shortcomings, drawing discussion to a close when the expression of ideas becomes redundant, and keeping topics in perspective so minor items do not take up a major amount of time. On decision items, the chairman's goal is to obtain consensus among the members. When consensus does not develop, an alternative to the traditional yes-no vote is the counting of "yes" votes only. The chairman instead asks: "At this time, how many are in favor of the motion?" If a majority vote "yes", the motion is passed. If fewer than half of the members present vote "yes", the motion is recorded as failing to pass. The counting of "yes" votes only helps to maintain a positive climate and avoids the negative action of voting against something. Motions pass, therefore, when there is a majority of "yes" votes at the meeting.

The board should avoid quick decisions. When the chairman senses that some members are puzzled and want additional information or time to think about the issue, he should delay the vote until the next regular meeting or a special meeting if the decision is urgently needed. Decisions which are made with considerable uncertainty are often regretted later. Seldom is there such urgency that the vote could not be delayed for a week or more.

Board members also play an important role. They will take time to prepare themselves for the meeting. Each member will help the chairman follow the agenda and conduct the meeting on schedule. Board members will all participate in the discussions and encourage one another to be active participants. All members will be sensitive to the feelings and needs of others so that a spirit of ministry is evident at all times.



C. AFTER THE MEETING

At the conclusion of each meeting, steps should be taken to be sure that decisions made by the board are implemented according to the directions of the group. Assignments should be made and deadlines established.

Minutes of the meeting should be written in a manner which clearly describes the activities of the board and which provides for easy reference at a later date. Minutes ought to be mailed soon after the meeting so follow-up assignments can be carried out in accord with the board's direction and so preparation for the next meeting can begin. Members who were absent should receive copies of the minutes and all handout materials so that they are informed and prepared for the next meeting.

The results of the meeting must be communicated to interested people. Congregation members, parents, students, staff members and others deserve to know about the decisions and activities of the board. Usually the principal assumes the responsibility for communicating board activity and decisions.

Board members will remember that while the board is in session, it makes decisions and prepares policy. At the conclusion of the meeting, individual board members are often expected to report and interpret what the board has done. Board members should do this positively, always refraining from reporting private information or other matters which may be viewed as gossip. Individual members should not make decisions or take action outside of board meetings. The board and its members function as a decision-making group only when the board is in session. Following the board meeting, individual members carry out their "role" as described earlier.

Note to the reader: You are urged to review the listing of documents on the last page of this booklet. Each document provides detailed information and help for the management of Lutheran schools.

PART TWO: POLICY MANUAL

HOW TO ESTABLISH A POLICY MANUAL

The board of education has responsibility for the entire operation of the school. However, the board wisely restricts its involvement in the school's daily affairs by establishing policies and delegating administrative responsibility to the principal and staff. Policies are essential, therefore, for giving direction to the principal and faculty in the daily administration of the school. Policies must be narrow enough to give clear guidance, but broad enough to leave room for discretion in specific situations. Policies serve as guidelines for the operation of the school. The principal with the help of teachers designs procedures for implementing the policies.

The board must understand the distinction between policy and procedure. The board must decide what it considers to be policy (the function of the board) and what administrative procedure (the function of the principal and faculty). Generally, the board focuses only on the formulation of policy and leaves the details of procedure to the judgment of the principal and staff members. The principal will usually seek advice from board members, faculty, students, parents and others before implementing board policies.

Recognizing the importance of policies, the board will provide for the development of a policy manual as an ongoing guide for the board, principal, staff, parents and students.

A. STEPS IN FORMULATING A POLICY

Policies which are established in a rigid, authoritarian manner, or without the input of those most affected, often create bitterness and may not be implemented effectively. It is important to gather ideas and suggestions from teachers, parents, students and others who may be affected by board policy. When consensus is not forthcoming, it may be wise to delay the policy making temporarily.

When the need for a policy is recognized, several questions must be asked in preparation for writing the policy.

1. Why is a policy necessary?
2. What are the intended positive outcomes?
3. What, if any, would be the negative results of the proposed policy?
4. What must be done to achieve the intended outcomes?

The following example of steps in developing a dress-code policy illustrates how a policy statement is developed.

Step 1. Discuss and answer the question, "Why is a dress-code policy needed?"

Both parents and teachers have expressed concern about the "sloppiness" of clothes that students wear. Some students wear shorts, shirts, and halter tops that seem appropriate for recreation but not the classroom. Parents and students are puzzled about appropriate school dress.

Step 2. Discuss and consider the question, "What are the intended positive outcomes?"

The school wants students to have a positive attitude for learning while they are at school. Studies suggest that a "sloppy" appearance is associated with a casual attitude toward learning. A neat appearance correlates with a greater interest and participation in learning activities and develops a positive self-image. The school's goal is that dress and appearance will facilitate rather than interfere with learning.

Step 3. "What, if any, would be the negative results of a dress-code policy?"

Some parents may have to spend more money on school clothes. Students will have to change clothes for physical education and athletics. Some students and parents may object.

Step 4. "What must be done to achieve the intended outcome?"

The school should require neat dress and appearance. The school should distinguish between "school clothes" and "recreation clothes." The principal, with advice from parents and teachers, should decide on specific styles of clothing as they change.

Step 5. The proposed policy is written by one or two persons on the basis of comment from parents and teachers during steps 1-4. The principal submits the written policy to the board.

Step 6. The board of education takes action on the proposed policy. The board may modify, reject or approve the proposed policy. If approved, the policy should be included in the policy manual.

Step 7. The principal is responsible for notifying students, parents and faculty and also for designing procedures for implementing the policy. First, the principal meets with parents and pupils to determine appropriate clothing styles, and then the teachers to establish specific guidelines for appearance. The principal informs parents of dress-code guidelines while teachers explain the dress code to the students.

Note the distinction between policy and administrative procedure in the "dress code" illustration. The policy applies to the general area of student appearance. It is intended to apply for a long period of time, and allows for some flexibility of interpretation and implementation. The procedures, on the other hand, apply to specific situations and prescribe a specific course of action. The policy answers the question, "What to do?" while the procedures answer the question, "How to do?"

B. POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUALS

The official policies and procedures of the school are usually maintained in three documents. The policy manual, sometimes called board of education handbook, contains all policies approved by the board. The procedures established for the operation of the school may be reported in two separate manuals: one for the faculty, also called teacher handbook, and one for parents, also called parent handbook.

Separating the policy manual from the procedure manuals is helpful in maintaining a clear distinction between the policy-setting function of the board and the administrative function of the principal and staff. Since policies have a longer duration, the policy manual has a format which is more permanent and provides for the insertion of additional pages when new policies are adopted. Procedures are revised more frequently so that a new printing of the procedure manual, especially for parents, is common every few years.

The policy manual enables the board to perform its function more effectively. Relying on memory or searching through board minutes is both inefficient and faulty. Good stewardship requires an organized compilation of all school policies into one manual for easy access by each board and staff member. This manual is especially helpful for the orientation of new board members and a new principal.

C. PRODUCING THE FIRST POLICY MANUAL

A policy manual should have a table of contents and three parts, as follows:

Table of Contents

Part One. By-laws of the board of education

Part Two. Purpose of the school

Part Three. School policies

The toughest part of producing the policy manual is getting started. First, select an *ad hoc* committee of two or three persons, including the principal. The committee will perform four steps as it moves toward completion of the school policies.

A board policy manual has been prepared by the American Lutheran Church and is available for $4.00 per copy from the American Lutheran Education Association, Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa, 50677.

Step 1. Search the board minutes for decisions that could be interpreted as school policy. Cut out each policy statement and attach it to a blank sheet of paper. Put only one policy on each page; however, if two or more statements relate to the same policy they may be placed on the same page. The date that each policy was approved should be noted at the end of the statement. Also search the teacher handbook, parent handbook, and other sources for policy statements

Step 2. Identify policies which are missing, and identify existing policy statements which are incomplete or need revision. Committee members are urged to read all documents in PLANNING FOR LUTHERAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS for suggestion of important areas to be covered by policy statements. Design a plan and timetable for filling in the gaps and making revisions. If a considerable number of policies need to be written or revised, the policy writing should be separated into two stages: Stage 1 includes the policies that can be written or revised more easily; these policies may already be established in the school but have never been written. Stage 2 includes the policies that will be more difficult to formulate or revise.

Step 3. After the principal, teachers, parents and other school handbooks have been consulted, prepare a rough draft of the policy statements. Use the four questions preceding the dress-code sample (page 23) in formulating each policy. Distribute a copy to each board member, teacher and pastor. Use their feedback to revise the policy statements, and then submit them to the board for action.

Step 4. Distribute a copy of the approved policies for each policy manual.

While the committee is working through steps 1-3 above in organizing and drafting policies, two other activities should happen. The faculty should prepare a rough draft of the school's purpose and present it to the board for comment, revision, and adoption. This statement becomes Part Two of the policy manual. In some instances, this statement may already exist. If so, review and seek board approval for inclusion in the policy manual.

Meanwhile, two or three persons should prepare a rough draft of the by-laws for the board of education. They should begin with the sections of the church's constitution and by-laws that apply to the board of education. Other school handbooks can be consulted for additional input. The by-laws are essential in the policy manual because they prescribe the policies for the operation of the board of education.

After the board by-laws, Part One, the school's purpose, Part Two, and the policies, Part Three, are finished, prepare the table of contents. Distribute a copy of the policy manual to each board member, pastor, and teacher. Keep a record in the school office to show who has each manual. This record will be important when changes are made in the manual.

Either the principal or the board secretary should be given the responsibility of keeping the manual current. Policy making is a continuous process. After new policies are approved or old ones revised, prepare a new page for the manual. If a policy is revised, remove the old page from the manual and insert the new page.

D. THE PRINCIPAL'S FUNCTION OF ADMINISTERING POLICY - THE PROCEDURE MANUAL

The principal prepares a procedure manual to inform teachers, students, and parents how the school policies are administered. For example, the board adopts a policy about the safety of students during an emergency such as fire or tornado; the principal is responsible for developing procedures for sounding an alarm, exiting classrooms, going to designated areas, and checking facilities. The board of education should require the principal to maintain an updated procedure manual as a companion to the board's policy manual. In many schools the procedure manual is called the teacher handbook. Selected procedures and policies may also be printed in a separate parent handbook.

The principal will prepare the procedure manual with input from teachers, students, and parents. He will avoid an autho:itarian style so that those affected by procedures will be more supportive in their implementation. A second guide for the principal is to keep the procedures simple. Without covering minute details, the procedures should give enough information to eliminate uncertainty and confusion.

POLICY MANUAL TABLE OF CONTENTS

This section contains guidelines for the content of school policies. These suggestions can help the board of education get started with writing the policies. Keep in mind that a good policy in one school may not work in another. Local circumstances require different policies. The topics for school policies may be grouped under five categories:

A. Curriculum, instruction, and school activities

B. Students and student services

C. Staff

D. Finances and property

E. Auxiliary groups

Each category contains an extensive listing of topics. The board should not attempt to tackle the entire list at one time. The principal can get the project started by asking board members and teachers to rate the importance of each of the listed topics. Work should then begin on the topic with the highest rating.

A. CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

1. Principles of Christian Teaching and Learning

The faculty should formulate a clear description of the teaching/learning process in the school by answering questions such as:

a. What does the school stand for in the process of instruction?

b. What steps are usually followed in the teaching/learning process?

c. What is the expected relationship between teachers and students?

d. What are the responsibilities of teachers?

e. What are the responsibilities of students?

f. How does the school respond to various types of individual needs?

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2. Accreditation

The policy should state whether the school is to be accredited by the state and other judicatories and if it intends to continue seeking or maintaining accreditation. (See E07)

3. Class Size

Some schools may want to specify a maximum and minimum for class size. When class limits are set, the board should also establish priorities on alternatives to follow when a class is filled. Possible alternatives may include (a) engaging a teacher aide for all or part of the day, depending on class size, (b) engaging a part-time teacher to assist the regular teacher with reading or math, (c) combining students with another grade level, and (d) starting a waiting list.

The policy should give direction to the principal without being so precise that it becomes restrictive in future years.

4. Discipline

The policy should state the school's position on Christian living and Christian discipline. The importance of Christian maturity, self-discipline and self-esteem should be stressed. The importance of law and gospel and the work of the Holy Spirit should be described.

5. Testing

In addition to describing the purpose and value of testing in the elementary school, the policy may

a. encourage teachers to use appropriate testing as an integral part of the instructional program;

b. prescribe whether standardized achievement tests should be administered annually;

c. prescribe whether standardized intelligence tests should be administered and how often;

d. require that other psychological tests be administered by qualified specialists with the approval of the principal and parents;

e. provide guidelines for all tests of physical development such as speech, hearing, vision, dental, etc.;

f. provide guidelines for any testing or observation that is done for a research or evaluation study.

The policy generally should not include the titles of tests, for the faculty should have flexibility in selecting tests and improving the testing program.

6. Accountability

The policy should express the board's intent to report regularly to parents and the congregation. It should also prescribe how often the board will evaluate and report on the performance of the school.

7. School Calendar

The policy should specify the length of the school year (number of school days) and include any guidelines for preparation of the calendar. For example, the principal may be instructed to follow the public-school calendar closely because students ride public-school buses, or the principal may be instructed to prepare the calendar in cooperation with a Lutheran high school or other Lutheran elementary schools.

8. Library and Media Center

The policy should describe the purpose of the library or media center in the school program. It should also define qualifications for the librarian and guidelines for adding resources to the library.

9. Field Trips

The policy should include

a. the purpose of field trips;

b. the responsibility of the teacher;

c. requirements for parental permission;

d. regulations on the use of buses, cars, and other types of transportation;

e. regulations on costs and the means for paying costs.

10. Curriculum Evaluation and Textbook Adoption

The policy should describe the importance of curriculum evaluation and require a plan whereby each subject matter area is given a thorough evaluation at least every _____ years. It should also state who must grant approval for textbook adoptions.

11. Worship

This policy should affirm the central importance of worship in the life of the school and specify who is responsible for deciding how the worship offerings are used.

12. Music Programs

The policy should describe the purpose of the band, choirs, and other music groups and answer the following questions: What are the qualifications for participation? What is expected of students in the program? What are the opportunities for performance?

13. Athletics

This policy should include

a. purpose of the program,

b. health requirements and medical exams,

c. qualifications of coaches,

d. methods for paying costs,

e. guidelines for practice time and scheduling of games and meets,

f. types of student awards,

g. expectations of students, and

h. whether participation is contingent on either athletic or academic performance.

14. Reporting Student Progress

The policy should include the purpose of student reports, the types of reporting techniques used, and the frequency of reports.

15. Special Student Events

The policy should describe the purpose of parties, visits to nursing homes, public performances and other student activities. The policy should also include guidelines for these events.

B. STUDENTS AND STUDENT SERVICES

1. Lifestyle of the Christian Student

The policy should describe

a. the Christian characteristic of the child's relationship to other students and to staff members,

b. the importance of forgiveness in healing broken relationships between students and between student and teacher, and

c. proper study habits shown by a good steward of God-given abilities.

2. Enrollment and Admission

This policy should answer the following questions:

a. What are the requirements for enrollment?

b. What is the minimum age (or cutoff date for birthdays) for kindergarten or first grade?

c. Who has authority for admitting a student?

d. What are the priorities on admission if there is not room for all applicants?

e. Who is responsible for recruiting members of the congregation in the school?

f. Is there a policy stating that enrollment is open to all children regardless of race, color, sex, and national or ethnic origin?

g. How are parents to be informed regarding purpose of school, role of parents, and expectation of parents and pupils?

h. Are safeguards provided so that school does not become a haven for students or parents seeking escape from public-school desegregation?

3. Attendance

The policy should stress the importance of regular attendance and prescribe action by the school in the event of tardiness or absence.

4. Promotion and Retention

The policy should define the criteria and authority for making decisions about promotion and retention. Cooperation with parents should be stressed, and procedures for parent appeal should be outlined.

5. Nondiscrimination

The policy should state that the school does not discriminate by race, color, sex, and national and ethnic origin. The principal or another employee should be designated as the compliance officer.

6. Transportation

In addition to describing transportation services, if any, the policy should (a) define the methods of setting and assessing the bus rates annually, and (b) include guidelines for the management of the transportation program.

7. Safety

The policy should state the importance of safety during normal conditions as well as emergencies such as fire, tornados, storms and floods. It should describe the school's responsibility for safety.

8. Student Records

The policy should answer the following questions:

a. What types of records are kept for students?

b. Who is responsible for keeping the various records up to date?

c. Who has access to the student files? for what reasons?

d. Is parent permission needed for transferring records to another school?

e. Are there any restrictions on the type of information in the student file?

f. What type of permanent record is maintained by the school after the student graduates or transfers to another school?

9. Dealing With Students Who Violate Christian Conduct

The policy should describe the steps that should be followed when a student deliberately and persistently disobeys school regulations.

10. Lunch Program

In addition to describing the lunch program, the policy should (a) provide guidelines for setting and assessing fees annually; (b) include the responsibilities and duties of the lunch program supervisor; and (c) describe provisions for reduced and free lunches.

11. Sickness and Injuries

The policy should answer the following questions:

a. Does the school maintain information about the child's doctor and ways to contact the parents and other designated persons in case of emergency?

b. What guidelines does a teacher follow when a student requires more than first aid?

c. Does the school require a signed explanation by the parent when the child returns to school after an illness or injury?

d. Does the school require a doctor's note when a child returns to school after a contagious disease?

e. Under what conditions can school personnel administer medication to a student?

f. Does the school make school accident insurance available for students?

12. Health Programs

The following questions should be answered:

a. When are medical exams required?

b. What are the requirements for immunization records?

c. What are the consequences for failing to comply with requirements?

d. What services are provided by the school nurse?

13. Dress Code

Refer to the comments on pages 24 and 25 of this handbook.

C. STAFF

1. Lifestyle of the Christian Teacher

   The policy should describe

   a. the Christian characteristics of the staff member's relationship to students, parents, other staff members, and visitors;

   b. the importance of forgiveness in healing broken relationships; and

   c. the role of the teacher as a model of the Christian lifestyle.

2. Principal's Job Description and Qualifications

   The policy should describe the major responsibilities of the principal, define whether state certification and synodical certification are required, and establish a formula for determining amount of teaching time and time for administration.

   See E04-Personnel Handbook for additional ideas about the content of this policy.

3. Teacher Qualifications and Duties

   The policy should deal with the following questions:

   a. Are teachers required to have state certification and synodical certification?

   b. Does the school have starting and ending dates for the teachers' work?

   c. Are the teachers required to make lesson plans, unit plans, or long-term goals?

   d. Does the board have job descriptions for the teachers?

4. Teacher Certification

   The policy should specify whether teachers are required or encouraged to have state and synodical certification.

5. Professional In-Service Growth

   The policy should include

   a. the importance of continual professional growth by all teachers;

   b. whether the teacher may use one or more school days for in-service experiences;

   c. whether the church pays ary costs for conferences and workshops;

   d. a statement that each teacher is required to attend official teachers' conferences sponsored by the district, region, or synod unless there is a sickness or other emergency; and

   e. the principal's role in planning in-service experiences for the faculty.

6. Principal Evaluation

The policy should first affirm the board's role in conducting an annual evaluation of the principal's performance and job description.

7. Teacher Evaluation

The policy should describe the purpose of teacher evaluation and require that the principal perform the evaluation annually with each teacher.

8. Divine Call, Contract, and Tenure

The policy should answer these questions: What types of formal agreement (divine call, contract, sacred agreement) are used by the congregation for engaging teachers? If two or more approaches are used, what are the conditions for using each one? Is the concept of tenure associated with any of the formal agreements?

9. Teacher Leaves - Sickness, Maternity, Personal

The policy should include

a. the number of days allowed for sickness each year;

b. the maximum number of days that can accumulate for sick leave;

c. the maximum number of days allowed for emergencies such as death or illness in the family;

d. whether the teacher may be granted a leave for personal reasons, and whether the teacher or church pays for the substitute;

e. whether a teacher may take a maternity leave and then return to the classroom soon after delivery, and whether the teacher receives any pay during the maternity leave.

10. Salary and Other Benefits

The teacher's salary schedule should specify

a. the increment for each year of experience and the maximum number of years recognized in the schedule for each level of education,

b. the increment for levels of education beyond the bachelor's degree,

c. the procedure for determining the salary of a teacher without a bachelor's degree if the faculty includes a nondegree teacher,

d. the procedure for determining additional pay for teachers with additional responsibilities, and

e. whether payments are made for nine, ten, or twelve months.

The policy should not state any dollar amounts, for the figures may change each year. See E04-Personnel Handbook for samples of salary schedules.

The policy should also establish procedures for paying teacher aides, the secretary, bus drivers, cooks, and other personnel.

The policy should describe both mandatory and optional benefits - for example, social security, retirement plan, and medical plan - and explain the procedures for determining the congregation's payment and the amount withheld from the employee's salary.

The board should annually establish the base salary for the teachers' salary schedule, the hourly rate and bus trip rate for other employees, and the percentage of payment for benefit plans.

11. Retirement

The policy should establish either a mandatory retirement age or a normal retirement age after which a decision is made annually about the teacher's continuation on the faculty.

12. Termination of Employment

The policy should define the reasons and procedures for termination of employment. See E04-Personnel Handbook for such reasons.

13. Equal Employment Opportunity

The following statement is a sample policy:

"_____ Church believes that employment opportunities should be available to men and women equally. This is also prescribed by Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972. Furthermore, _____ Church believes that employment opportunities should be available equally to persons of any race. We, therefore, do not discriminate on the basis of sex or race in administering our educational policies, programs, activities, and employment practices."

"The Board of Education designates _____ as the Title IX officer for _____ School."

14. Procedure for Employing New Personnel

The policy should include the following:

a. the principal's responsibility for preparing a description of the qualifications and duties of the needed teacher and submitting it to the board for approval;

b. the principal's responsibility for publicizing the job and seeking applicants in line with the policy on equal employment opportunity;

c. the principal's responsibility for screening candidates and making a recommendation to the board. The principal may choose to include teachers and board members in the screening process;

d. the board's responsibility for making the final decision in extending a call, contract, or sacred agreement to one of the candidates.

When the school needs a principal, the pastor and board should function as a corporate body for steps a and c. The pastor or an appointed board member could perform step b.

15. Teacher Records

The policy should answer these questions:

a. What types of records should be kept for teachers - for example, years of experience, previous employment, transcript of credits, state certification, number of leave days used and accumulated for sickness and other reasons, date of last medical exam and tuberculin test, etc.?

b. Who has access to the teacher files?

c. Is the principal required to place an annual evaluation report in each teacher's file?

d. Are there any restrictions on the type of information or use of information in the file?

e. What type of permanent record is maintained by the school after the teacher retires or terminates employment?

16. Substitute Teachers

The policy should define

a. the qualifications of the substitute teacher,

b. the duties of the substitute,

c. the responsibilities of the regular teacher in planning lessons for the substitute, and

d. that the pay rate will be established annually by the board.

If the substitute continues to teach every day for an extended period, state that the substitute teacher's pay will be determined by the teacher's salary schedule after a specified number of consecutive teaching days.

D. FINANCES AND PROPERTY

1. Preparation of Budget

Using E08-Financial Planning and Accounting Handbook as a guide, the policy should describe the responsibilities and procedures for preparing the budget each year.

2. Tuition and Other Income

The policy should

a. describe the various types of financial support for the school, including church contributions, the tuition schedule, registration fees, and other mandatory and optional fees;

b. describe the method for collecting each type of income;

c. explain procedures whereby low-income families can apply for a scholarship or a reduction in tuition and fees;

d. establish the consequences for failing to pay fees by a specified date;

e. prescribe that the board should annually set the rates for each type of fee; and

f. describe the procedure for determing the amount of refund when a student withdraws during the school year.

3. Approved School Funds

The policy should specify

a. whether tuition payments and registration fees are deposited in the church account or in a separate school account;

b. whether bus fees, lunch fees, band fees, athletic fees, library fees, special gifts, and other miscellaneous income are all deposited in one school account or in separate accounts;

c. who has authority for spending money in each fund; and

d. in what circumstances the board must approve expenditures.

See E08-Financial Planning and Accounting Handbook for recommendations on establishing school accounts.

4. Use of Facilities by Other Groups

The policy should affirm the school's cooperation in making the facility available for other activities in the congregation.

If school facilities are available to outside groups, the policy should

a. describe the procedures that outside groups should follow in applying for the use of school facilities;

b. establish a formula for determining rental charges; and

c. note any restrictions on types of activity or time of use.

5. Care of Property

In addition to affirming the importance of good stewardship in caring for all property, facilities, equipment, and materials used by the school, the policy should describe guidelines for the maintenance of all property and define the principal's role in supervising the maintenance and custodial services.

E. AUXILIARY GROUPS

1. By-Laws of the Parent-Teacher Organization

The policy should include information about membership, officers, duties of officers, and the procedures for any formal action by the group. See sample by-laws for the board of education to get ideas for the by-laws of the parent-teacher organization. Ask the current officers to prepare the by-laws and submit them to the board for approval.

PLANNING FOR LUTHERAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

E01	WHY THE LUTHERAN SCHOOL	Rev. Paul Pallmeyer Minneapolis, Minnesota
E02	GUIDELINES FOR STARTING A NEW SCHOOL	Mr. Neal Meitler Dr. Martin Wessler Milwaukee, Wisconsin
E03	BOARD OF EDUCATION HANDBOOK	Dr. Glenn Bracht Waverly, Iowa
E04	PERSONNEL HANDBOOK	Mr. Kenneth Markworth Waverly, Iowa
E05	RECRUITMENT/PUBLIC RELATIONS/TRANSPORTATION HANDBOOK	Mr. Richard Sauer Ft. Wayne, Indiana
E06	LEGAL REQUIREMENTS	Mr. Wilbur Tewes Appleton, Wisconsin
E07	CURRICULUM PLANNING GUIDELINES	Dr. Glenn Kraft Seward, Nebraska
E08	FINANCIAL PLANNING AND ACCOUNTING HANDBOOK	Mr. Neal Meitler Milwaukee, Wisconsin
E09	FUNDING ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	Mr. Neal Meitler Dr. Martin Wessler Milwaukee, Wisconsin
E10	BUILDING AND EQUIPMENT PLANNING	Mr. Robert Eggold Topeka, Kansas
E11	THE ROLE OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN CHANGING COMMUNITIES	Mr. Donald Kell Ann Arbor, Michigan
E12	PARENTS AS PARTNERS	Mr. Eldor Kaiser Appleton, Wisconsin
E13	MODEL LUTHERAN SCHOOLS	Mr. Ellsworth Kierbs Seward, Nebraska

The above materials can be ordered from:

Board of Parish Education
The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod
3558 South Jefferson Avenue
St. Louis, Missouri 63118

or

The American Lutheran Church
Mr. Don Vetter
Wartburg College
Waverly, Iowa 50677

The most effective agencies available to the Church for equipping God's people for ministry are the Lutheran elementary and secondary schools.

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